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# State of Utah

## DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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### Next Phase of Application for Utah Lake Proposal Means Further Study

Provo, Utah – The Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands will conduct an environmental and feasibility study in conjunction with its decision on whether to issue a lease for a bridge across Utah Lake. Using a resource specialist review team, the study will allow the Division to conduct a full assessment of all feasibility issues as well as all potential impacts to the land. The analysis will allow the agency to make a fully informed decision on whether to approve the application for the bridge lease or instead leave the sovereign lands as they are.

The current Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for Utah Lake does not address the issue of a bridge, so the CMP as well as state statutes and regulations require additional study and planning. The study will be conducted by the review team made up of experts from areas including, but not limited to, ecology, transportation, environmental quality, economics, and engineering.

An application to leave the same part of Utah Lake undeveloped has been rejected due to incompleteness. The applicant, Utah Valley Earth Forum was notified of the deficiency in August, then a 60-day period was granted for the application to be completed. The group supplied some information, but did not give a full estimation of the financial aspects of the proposal. Therefore, the application was rejected for failing to provide all of the necessary information. The process now moves forward with just a single application; however, the analysis could still result in the land staying undeveloped.

“There are two alternatives here,” says Forestry, Fire and State Lands Director Dick Buehler. “One alternative is approving the lease application for the bridge, and the other alternative is to reject the application and leave the land undeveloped. Rejecting the Forum’s application does not eliminate either outcome.”

As part of the analysis, two public meetings will be held. The first meeting, set to take place in Utah County, will be held on November 18. A 45-day public comment period will begin November 15, 2010.

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